

# **PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF INFORMATION**

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**SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS IN SEPTEMBER 2002**

## **WENDELL PHILLIPS HIGH SCHOOL 244 E. PERSHING ROAD**

**BUILT: 1904**

**ARCHITECT: WILLIAM BRYCE MUNDIE (1863-1939)**

Wendell Phillips High School is a three-story brick building located at the south edge of the Black Metropolis-Bronzeville Historic district, on Pershing Road between Prairie and Giles Avenues. The building, constructed in 1904, was one of several schools designed by William Bryce Mundie (1863-1939) while he was Architect for the Chicago Board of Education (1898 to 1904). The school is a fine example of the large, symmetrical, Neo-Classical school buildings built in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The school was named for Wendell Phillips (1811-1884), the staunch white abolitionist who was one of the leading figures in the American anti-slavery movement. Early yearbooks portray a racial mix in the student body, but by 1920 the school had become Chicago's first predominantly African-American high school. During that period the school served as an educational center for Southern blacks that arrived in Chicago during the Great Migration (for Chicago, the late 1910s and 1920s). During the 1920s and 1930s, the school's winning basketball teams formed the nucleus of a group that later became the Harlem Globetrotters.

Maudelle Brown Bousfield (1885-1971) was principal of Wendell Phillips High School from 1939 to 1950. In addition to being the first African-American principal of a Chicago public school, Bousfield counted numerous other "firsts" in her career and served on several citywide boards and committees. As a teacher, a researcher, and an administrator, Bousfield worked continuously for the improvement of education for African-American children.



Above: Wendell Phillips High School as it appears in 2002 at its site on Pershing Road between Prairie and Giles avenues. Constructed in 1904, the school is a fine example of the large, symmetrical, Neo-Classical school buildings built in the first quarter of the twentieth century, one of several schools designed by William Bryce Mundie (1863-1939) while he was Architect for the Chicago Board of Education (1898 to 1904).

## BUILDING AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Built almost a century ago, Wendell Phillips High School was hailed as one of Chicago's first "modern" high schools, according to the *ALA Guide to Chicago*. The guide goes on to state that the building was "intended to grace an affluent neighborhood with a 'stately presence' of red brick and a colossal Ionic order and to provide 'everything that can vitalize and energize the school work.'"

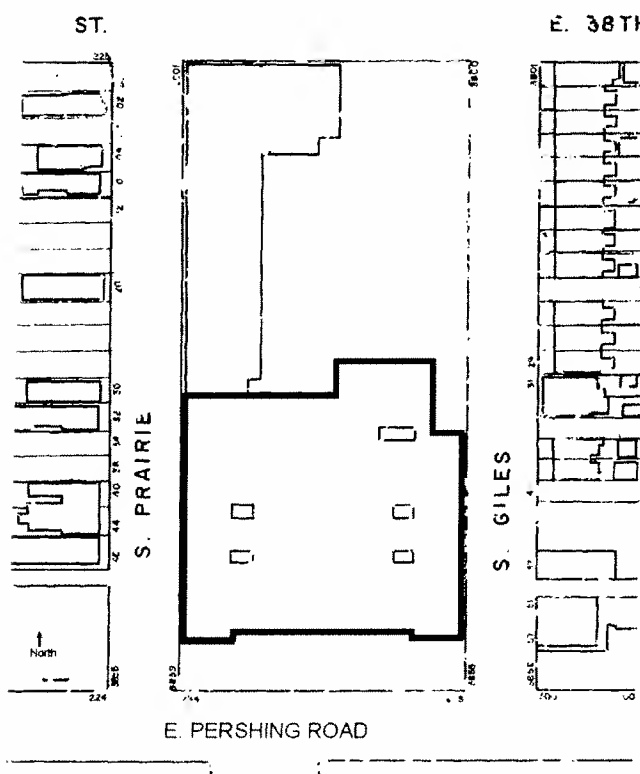
Today, Wendell Phillips High School remains a fine example of the large, symmetrical, neo-classical school buildings built in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Located on Pershing Road between Prairie and Giles avenues, the school is a three-story brick building, constructed in 1904, and one of several schools designed by William Bryce Mundie (1863-1939) while he was Architect for the Chicago Board of Education (1898 to 1904).

Phillips was constructed at a time when Chicago's infrastructure was racing to keep up with the growing population. Ellin Wineberg's 1982 study counts 74 public schools built in the city in the 1880s, 72 in the 1890s, and 72 in Phillips' 1900-1910 decade. To facilitate this extensive building program, the Board used identical or similar plans and materials, "with some variation in decorative details," according to Wineberg. Phillips' neo-classical design is shared primarily with six other schools designed by Mundie during his time as Board Architect: George Dewey Public School (1899), John C. Coonley School (1901), Joseph Jungman Public School (1902), Ambrose Plamondon Public School (1903), William McKinley High School (1903), and Patrick Henry Public School (1904).

Phillips' design reflected a change in schools built during the 1900-1910 decade. First, it had more classrooms than schools built in the previous decades—48 classrooms for the manual and academic training of 1,700 students, with a gymnasium and a lunchroom. Second, it had an auditorium in its center, constructed to provide a locale for community events, a relatively new idea at that time. Phillips was built in 1904 at a cost of about \$400,000 with an almost square footprint of 200' x 264', totaling 52,800 square feet.

Phillips' south façade (facing Pershing road) includes a five-foot high ornamental iron fence punctuated by carved limestone piers surrounding the courtyards on either side of the entry into the school. The building's base is a high limestone basement, surrounded by a protruding belt course. The front entry is through three elaborate archways; doors have stone columns on either side with transoms overhead topped by decorative carved stone lintels. The middle part of the south facade has three-story stone columnar piers separating the windows. Cut stone lintels with raised keystones embellish second-floor windows. At the top, a metal cornice has replaced the original cornice at some point prior to 1966.

In 1906, the Alumni of South Division High School contributed to Wendell Phillips High School four decorative paintings by well-known artists. Although not part of this designation, the paintings have been recently restored and are worth noting. The paintings and their artists are: *American Indians* by Dudley Crafts Watson (1885-1972), first director of the Milwaukee Art Institute (1914 to 1924); *American Indians with Missionary* by Lauros



Left: Wendell Phillips High School is located at 244 E. Pershing Road. The 1937 and 1944 additions to the rear of the high school (on the north elevation) are not part of this designation.

Below: Wendell Phillips (1811-1884), the staunch white abolitionist for whom the school is named.



Above: Wendell Phillips High School as constructed in 1904. Note the original ornate cornice, lost sometime prior to 1966.

Monroe (Frank) Phoenix, Chicago Art Institute instructor; *Ancient Greek Ceremony* by Gayle P. Hoskins (1887-1962), known for his pulp magazine covers; and *Ancient Greek Figures* by Albert E. Gidding.

# WENDELL PHILLIPS HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY

When Chicago organized its high schools in 1875, it established North Division, West Division, and South Division high schools, in addition to Chicago High School, according to the section of the city in which each was located. South Division High School was organized in the Mosely School at the corner of Michigan and 24<sup>th</sup> and then transferred to the southwest corner of 26<sup>th</sup> and Wabash. It remained the only high school to serve the South Side prior to 1900, and was predominantly white with only a few African-American students.

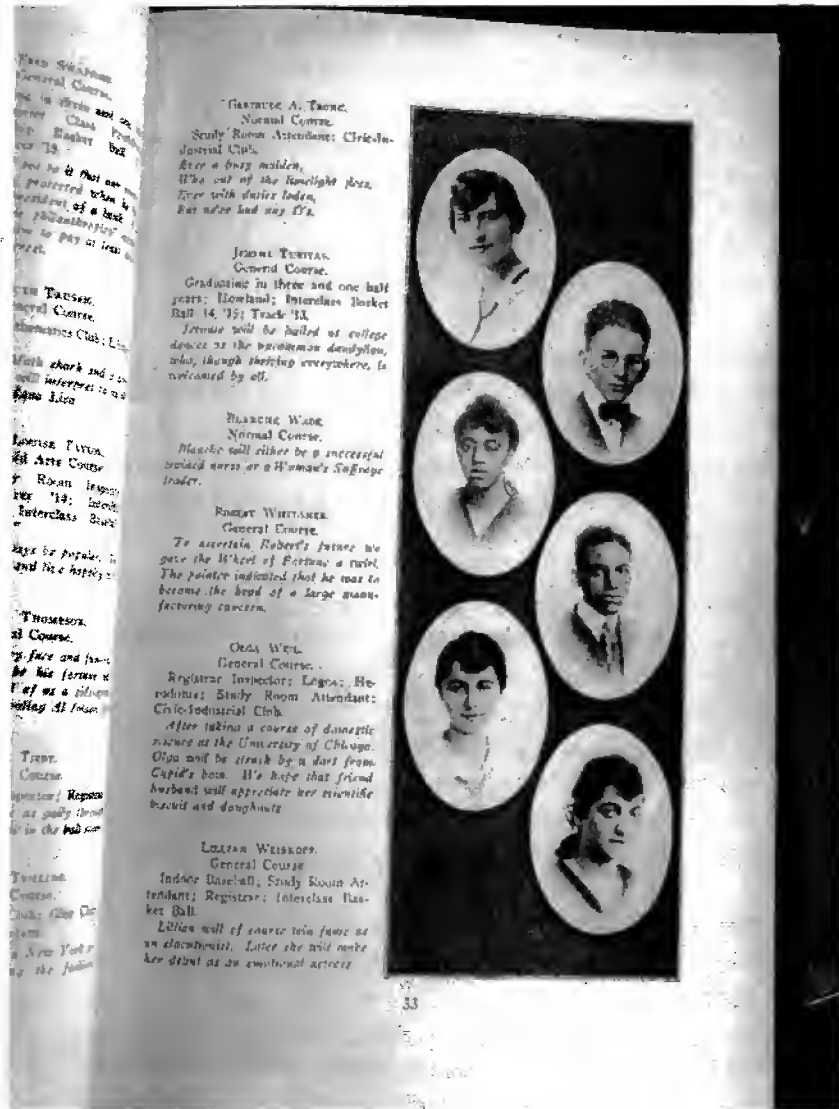
By 1902, population growth on the South Side required construction of a new South Division high school, this one at the intersection of Prairie and Forest avenues. (Forest was later renamed Giles Avenue in honor of Lieutenant George L. Giles, a black officer in the Eighth Infantry Regiment who was killed in World War One). In 1903, before the new school opened, the Chicago Board of Education decided to name it for Wendell Phillips (1811-1884), a staunch white abolitionist (who never lived in Chicago and had been dead for only nineteen years).

Wendell Phillips had been born on November 29, 1811, in Boston, Massachusetts, a descendent of that city's first mayor. He graduated from Harvard College in 1831 and from Harvard Law School in 1833, and was admitted to the bar the next year. Phillips was converted to the abolition of slavery cause when he heard William Lloyd Garrison speak at the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society in 1835. Phillips was particularly impressed by the bravery of the abolitionists when during the meeting a white mob attempted to lynch Garrison. Outraged by what he saw, Phillips decided in 1836 to give up law and devote himself to obtaining freedom of all slaves.

Phillips became a leading figure in the Anti-Slavery Society, and was the most dramatic orator in the American anti-slavery movement. His eloquent 1837 protest in Boston on the assassination of the abolitionist editor Elijah P. Lovejoy marked the beginning of his long and distinguished career as a lecturer. Phillips also authored abolitionist pamphlets and wrote editorials for Garrison's "Liberator." He died in Boston on February 2, 1884, and his name became synonymous with the abolitionist movement. Other schools named after him are located in Boston and Kansas.

In Chicago, the new Wendell Phillips High School received its first students and teachers from South Division High School on August 31, 1904. (South Division High School appears to have subsequently become a Manual Training High School.) Early yearbooks portray a racial mix in the student body, with both whites and African-Americans attending the school. Phillips' record books from these years reveal many students from wealthy white families, including the Armours, Swifts, Cudahys, Stevens, Pullmans, and McCormicks.

Left: A page from the 1915 Phillips yearbook, *Red and Black*, showing both whites and African-Americans attending the school.



As late as 1912, there were only four black students in the graduating class, according to Dr. Annabelle Carey Prescott, former Phillips student and teacher (and daughter of Rev. Archibald Carey, sister of Judge Archibald Carey, Jr.).

### The Great Migration

Soon afterwards, however, there was a shift in the racial composition of Wendell Phillips High School students, a direct result of “the Great Migration,” a period in the early 1900s when approximately a half million African-Americans left the South and journeyed to cities in the North and West. It was the largest internal movement of a people in such a concentrated period of time in the history of the United States. In Chicago, between 1910 and 1920, the African-American population grew from just over 40,000 to nearly 110,000. Between 1920 and 1930, it more than doubled again.

Historian Timuel Black describes those who left the South in this first Great Migration as “educated, urban African-Americans” who came north to pursue greater opportunities for employment and individual freedom. Chicago became their specific destination, largely because of the national distribution of the *Chicago Defender*, one of the city’s black newspapers. Founded in 1905 by Robert S. Abbott, a black Georgian who came to Chicago in 1899, the *Defender* was distributed in numerous small southern towns by Pullman railroad porters, who were usually black and stationed in Chicago. These men touted Chicago as a place of opportunity for African-Americans, particularly the South Side’s “Black Belt,” an area that by 1920, according to Allan H. Spear in his book, *Black Chicago*, was bounded on the north by 22<sup>nd</sup>, on the east by Cottage Grove, on the south by 55<sup>th</sup>, and on the west by Wentworth. Today, this area includes the Black Metropolis-Bronzeville District, designated a Chicago Landmark in 1994, and the Calumet-Giles-Prairie District, designated a Chicago Landmark in 1988.

The First World War stepped up migration of blacks from the South to Chicago because there was a need for them as industrial workers in the growing stockyards, steel mills, and foundries of the city. They crowded into the burgeoning Black Belt, which expanded gradually into neighboring areas. This strain on housing added to other tensions that erupted in race riots in Chicago during the summer of 1919. In the aftermath, the Black Belt became almost exclusively populated by African-Americans, and the surrounding areas exclusively by whites.

According to Mary Ellen Noah Rush in her thesis on Wendell Phillips High School, the school came to be regarded by some as “a symbol of one of the first major thrusts of Blacks in their assimilation into Chicago’s society and institutions.” In *Black Chicago*, Spear recounts some problems with that assimilation when, in 1915, there was an effort to set up separate social activities for white and black students. School superintendent Mrs. Ella Flagg Young “declared that if the school continued this policy, all social affairs would be canceled.” By 1920, however, the issue was moot, since the student population at Phillips was almost entirely composed of African-Americans.



**Left: An adult education class at Wendell Phillips High School. The school was instrumental in educating African-Americans who migrated north during the Great Migration.**

### Phillips Basketball

One school activity that prospered despite the pervasive racial discrimination of the time was the sport of basketball. Wendell Phillips High School, along with the Wabash Avenue YMCA (designated a Chicago Landmark in 1988) and the South Side Boys' Club, formed the "golden triangle" of Chicago's basketball talent, according to Larry Hawkins, a black sports history authority and former coach at the South Side Carver High School (as quoted by Robert Pruter of the Illinois High School Association).

Lenny Sachs, who later became the first professional coach of Loyola basketball, coached basketball at Phillips from 1919 to 1921. Like other high schools at the time, Phillips did not designate varsity or junior varsity teams, but, instead, had "heavyweight" and "lightweight" divisions. As Pruter writes, "it was the lightweight teams at Phillips that were the first to call attention in dramatic fashion to the black talent in the Chicago schools. In 1926, the team made the semifinals of the Public League championship before succumbing to Englewood (then a virtually all-white school)." In 1928 the Phillips lightweight team beat Harrison to win the Public league title. Basketball had found a home at Phillips.

In 1930 the Phillips heavyweight team won the Public League title, defeating Morgan Park High at the White City arena. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, the Phillips team had been the "favorite for the title since the opening of the schedule" two months earlier. That year, the big post-season tourney in Chicago was not the state tournament, which was considered the preserve of downstate schools, but the Stagg National Tournament hosted by the University of Chicago. (A few schools participated in the state tourney each year on an individual basis, but not Phillips.)

Every year prior to 1930, the winner of the Public League title was an automatic entry in the Stagg National Tournament. That year, however, Morgan Park got the invitation despite Phillips' record. According to Pruter, "the *Chicago Tribune* made no mention of this injustice," but the *Chicago Defender* "gave it front-page treatment," arguing that Phillips was barred because southern teams pressured officials to keep the tournament segregated. The Stagg tourney in 1930 faced increasing resistance to segregation from educators, and many states, especially those from the North, refused to send their champions. The southern states were still eager participants, and barring Phillips was an obvious but reprehensible way to keep the tourney alive. The *Defender* pointed this out, and concluded by stating "the university athletic department had bowed to the will of the ex-Confederates and their offspring." Despite the Stagg rebuff, subsequent generations of Phillips basketball teams continued to dominate the sport in the Chicago area.

Just as basketball had dominated Phillips in the 1920s and 1930s, football apparently dominated the 1940s. Again, it was Lenny Sachs who coached the Phillips team, in addition to his role as Loyola basketball coach and Athletic Director. In 1942, however, before a big game between Phillips and DuSable to be held at Soldier Field, Sachs had a fatal heart attack just outside the physical education building at Phillips. Despite this, the Phillips team was Public League Champion in 1943, led by the great running back Claude "Buddy" Young.

### "Savoy Big Five"

The basketball teams at Phillips in the 1920s produced important players, including those who were part of a semi-professional basketball team called the "Savoy Big Five." Organized and coached by Dick Hudson, the group was named for Chicago's famous Savoy Ballroom, which was designed after the New York version with the same name. Located next to the Regal Theater at 47<sup>th</sup> and South Park (then Grand Boulevard), the Savoy Ballroom featured most of the big bands of the day. It also served as a community center and sports venue for black Chicago. Soon after its opening in 1927 it began hosting semi-professional basketball matches two nights a week with its own team, the "Savoy Big Five."

Promoter Abe Saperstein (then age 24) purchased the Savoy Big Five team not long after they opened at the Savoy. Changing their name to the "Harlem Globetrotters," he and the team began touring the Midwest; their first game was in Hinckley, Illinois. Saperstein's first Globetrotters teams featured several Phillips players, including (with their positions and years at Phillips): Tommy Brookins (forward on the heavyweight teams of 1924 and 1925); Hillary Brown (c. 1925); Inman Jackson (lightweight center, 1926); "Luscious" Lester Johnson (heavyweight guard, 1924); Byron "Fat" Long (forward, 1926); Willis or William "Kid" Oliver (c. 1925); Al "Runt" Pullins (from the Phillips lightweight championship team of 1928); Randolph Ramsey (heavyweight center, 1925); and Walter "Toots" Wright (heavyweight guard, 1924, 1925, and 1926).

The Harlem Globetrotters were among the best-known black "barnstorming" basketball teams of the 1930s. In 1940, the Globetrotters won the World Professional Basketball Tournament by defeating the Chicago Bruins, 31-29. The Globetrotters, along with other barnstorming teams such as the New York Renaissance and the Philadelphia Tribunes, provided an outlet for talented black basketball players, such as those from Phillips, at a time when they were still not welcome in the white basketball leagues.

### DuSable High School

By the end of the 1920s, junior high students had joined high school students at Wendell Phillips High School, and the increase in student body numbers forced some drastic accommodations. The school instituted two half-day shifts for students. A dozen or more stove-heated portable buildings were built on the school's parking lot to accommodate the students. Finally, in 1929, the Board of Education voted to construct a new \$3.5 million Wendell Phillips High School at 49<sup>th</sup> and Wabash Avenue. Politics and the Great Depression stalled the completion of the new school, and by 1933 Wendell Phillips High School was bursting with 4,030 students, well over its maximum capacity of 1,890.

A fire at Phillips on January 29, 1935, changed things. Starting in the gymnasium, the fire spread to the assembly hall and the lunch room. The assembly hall and the gymnasium were completely destroyed and the lunch room below was severely damaged. The Board of Education estimated \$125,000 in damages. In addition to affecting students, the fire temporarily displaced numerous community groups that used the assembly hall, including the congregation of the Greater Bethel A.M.E. church, which had been holding services there. Phillips, however, was ready for classes by the following Monday, February 4, 1935.





SAVOY BIG FIVE BASKETBALL TEAM — 1926 L. to R. Ast, Coach Bobby Anderson, Randolph Ramsey, Inman Jackson, William Watson, Tommy Brookings, Joe Lillard, Wm. Grant, Walter Wright, Lester Johnson, Coach Rick Hudson

Above: The Savoy Big Five, c. 1927, with players from Wendell Phillips High School.

Below: The Savoy Ballroom, located next to the Regal Theater at 47<sup>th</sup> and South Park (then Grand Boulevard).



Right: The Harlem Globetrotters, successor to the Savoy Big Five, with several Phillips players.



ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS  
Left to right (standing) Abe Saperstein, Toots Wright, Byron Long, Inman Jackson, William Oliver, (seated) Al Pullins.

Despite this, all Phillips students were immediately sent to the new high school, even though it was unfinished. They took with them the original Phillips school colors of red and black. The new school was later named Jean Baptiste Point DuSable High School. The old Wendell Phillips High School was first converted to use as an elementary school. It quickly became apparent, however, that authorities had underestimated the number of high school students in the Black Belt. Phillips soon opened again as a high school, with a new freshman class and new school colors of blue and white.

On November 11, 1937, there was another fire at Wendell Phillips High School, causing an estimated \$30,000 damage. “The heat was so intense,” School Board minutes report, “that that exterior brick walls and piers, also cut stone arches and sill courses, will have to be rebuilt.” Subsequent minutes do not discuss any exterior rebuilding, so it is assumed that the damage estimate was revised downward. School Board blueprints show that Wendell Phillips Elementary School was added to the north side of the high school in 1944.

Severe overcrowding in the 1960s prompted Phillips to go to three shifts, running a twelve-period day in order to cope with the large number of students. In 1962, Phillips added the “Abbott Branch” at Princeton and 37<sup>th</sup> to accommodate the overflow of freshmen. The Abbott Branch was in operation until at least 1971. Beginning in the 1970s, Phillips underwent a major rehabilitation, however the student population began a gradual but steady decline in number. The lack of available housing within the community as well as a change in the Board of Education’s student transfer policy to foster integration contributed to the declining enrollment.

#### Phillips “Hall of Fame”

In an effort to promote school pride, a group of alumni of Wendell Phillips High School instituted a “Hall of Fame” in 1979. Since that time there have been approximately 400 inductees, all Phillips students from the 1910s to the recent past, and the school’s main hallway wall is lined with their photographs.

Hall of Famers may be well known locally, such as David Kellum, a journalist and a member of the editorial staff for the *Chicago Defender* (and known as “Bud Billiken”). Some have achieved “firsts” in their field, such as Alonzo S. Parham, the first African-American at West Point. Others are famous entertainers, including Nat “King” Cole, Dinah Washington, Sam Cooke, George Kirby, Willis “Ray” Nance (who played with Duke Ellington’s band), jazz bassist and photographer Milton Hinton, and television’s Marla Gibbs. Business owners in the school’s Hall of Fame include John H. Johnson (Johnson Publishing) and George E. Johnson (Johnson Products). Political figures include civil rights activist and Judge Archibald Carey, Jr. and Representative (from Texas) Wilhelmina Delco. Sports figures include Dallas Cowboy and Olympic star Claude “Buddy” Young and Golden Gloves National Boxing champion Lee Roy Murphy.

Wendell Phillips High School was rehabilitated once more in the mid-1990s, adding green space and more sports facilities to the north of the building.



Above: Trumpeter Ray Nance, backstage at the Shrine Auditorium, in a Duke Ellington concert, Los Angeles, 1951.

Below: Dinah Washington, one of the most versatile and gifted vocalists in American popular music history.



Above: Sam Cooke, songwriter and performer and one of the most popular and influential black singers to emerge in the late 1950s.

#### A FEW OF THE APPROXIMATELY 400 MEMBERS OF THE WENDELL PHILLIPS HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME

Right: George E. Johnson, retired Chairman of Johnson Products Company, Inc., the first minority-run business to be listed on the American Stock Exchange.



Left: Milt "the Judge" Hinton, one of the world's great jazz bassists.



Left: Television and movie actress Marla Gibbs.

Now called Wendell Phillips Academy High School, the school is part of the Chicago "Annenberg Challenge," known as the Wendell Phillips Academy-Bronzeville Redevelopment Strategy. Although the teaching methods may have changed, the school continues to play an important role in the South Side community that it has served for generations. Historian Timuel Black considers it "a symbol of the world that was" and contends that the school serves as a focus for Chicago's black community. Few buildings remain in Chicago's South Side that hold as many memories of the struggles of African-Americans in the twentieth century as Wendell Phillips High School.

### MAUELLE BROWN BOUSFIELD

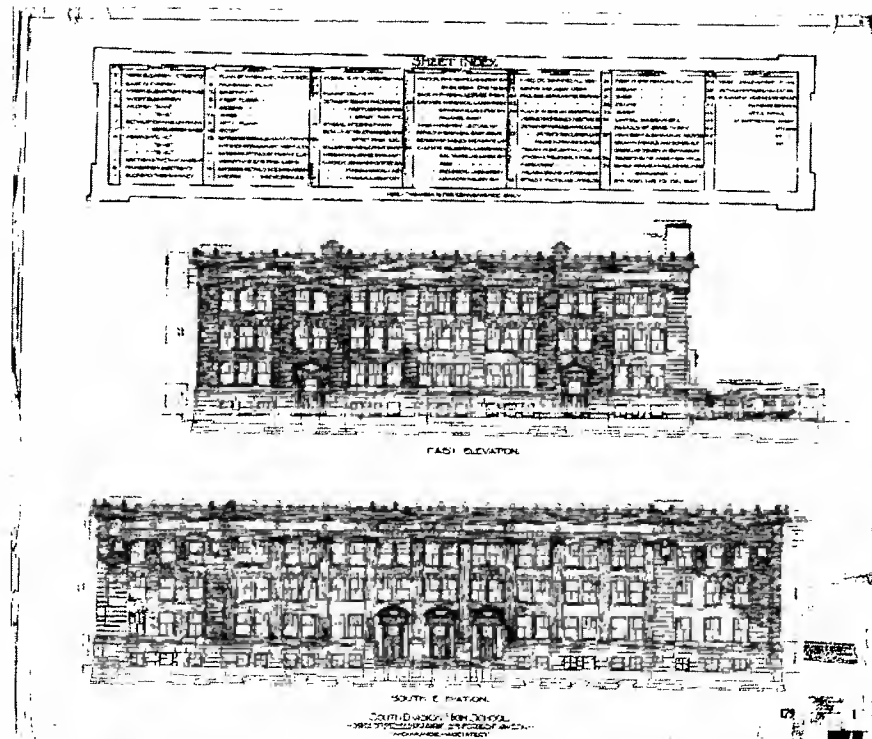
Maudelle Brown Bousfield (1885-1971) was the first African-American principal of a Chicago public school. She began her teaching career in East St. Louis, Illinois, in 1906. In 1921 she began to teach mathematics at Wendell Phillips High School and in 1939 she became the school's principal. She was initiated in 1921 into Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA), the first Greek-letter organization founded by African-American women. In 1929, in recognition of her leadership and service to the sorority, she was elected Sixth Supreme Basileus, or national leader, of AKA.

During World War Two, Maudelle Brown Bousfield was the only African-American member of the Women's Advisory Committee of the federal War Manpower Commission. Later, she was vice-president of the board of directors for Provident Hospital, an institution that served the black community, and a member of the Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and the Community Fund of Chicago. She was the first African-American to serve on the Board of Oral Examiners of Chicago, conducting principal's examinations from 1946 until retirement from her position as principal of Wendell Phillips High School in 1950.

During the 1940s, Bousfield's husband, Colonel Midian O. Bousfield, M. D., was the first African-American appointed to membership on the Chicago School Board (he was a founder and officer of the Supreme Life Insurance Company). An active Episcopalian, Maudelle Bousfield served from 1947 to 1959 as president of the board of trustees of St. Edmund's School, an Episcopal institution affiliated with St. Edmund's Church, which her husband helped to found.

Along with her many other activities, Bousfield maintained her interest in music, graduating with a BA from Chicago's Mendelssohn Conservatory of Music in 1950. She was a charter member of the National Association of Negro Musicians, which was formed in Chicago after World War One. She enjoyed an active retirement, and was especially enthusiastic about gardening. Bousfield wrote a weekly column, "Let's Grow a Garden," for the *Chicago Defender*. She also hosted a radio program, "Maudelle Bousfield Chats."

Bousfield died at age 86. As a teacher, a researcher, and an administrator, she worked for the improvement of education for African-American children. In honor of her achievements, her portrait hangs in the social room of Wendell Phillips High School.



Left: Blueprint by William Bryce Mundie for "South Division High School," later named Wendell Phillips High School. Mundie was Architect for the Chicago Board of Education from December 1898 to May 1904.



Above: One of the three elaborate archways on the south elevation of the school. Doors have stone columns on either side with transoms overhead topped by decorative carved stone lintels.



Above: Cut stone lintels with raised keystones embellish the second-floor windows of the school.

## WILLIAM BRYCE MUNDIE

William Bryce Mundie (1863-1939) was born in Hamilton, Ontario, on April 30, 1863, to William and Margaret Finlayson (Bryce) Mundie, natives of Aberdeenshire and Lanarkshire, Scotland, respectively. His paternal grandfather was an architect in Scotland and his father followed the same profession in Toronto, Canada, for a number of years. Mundie was educated in public schools and the Hamilton Collegiate Institute. He worked as an "indentured student" (his own term) for Peter Brass from 1880 to 1884. That year he came to Chicago and was hired almost immediately as a draftsman by William Le Baron Jenney. In 1891 he became Jenney's partner in the firm of Jenney & Mundie. In 1892 he married Jenney's niece, Bessie Russel. They had three children: Elizabeth Jenney, Margaret Bryce, and Jean Fraser.

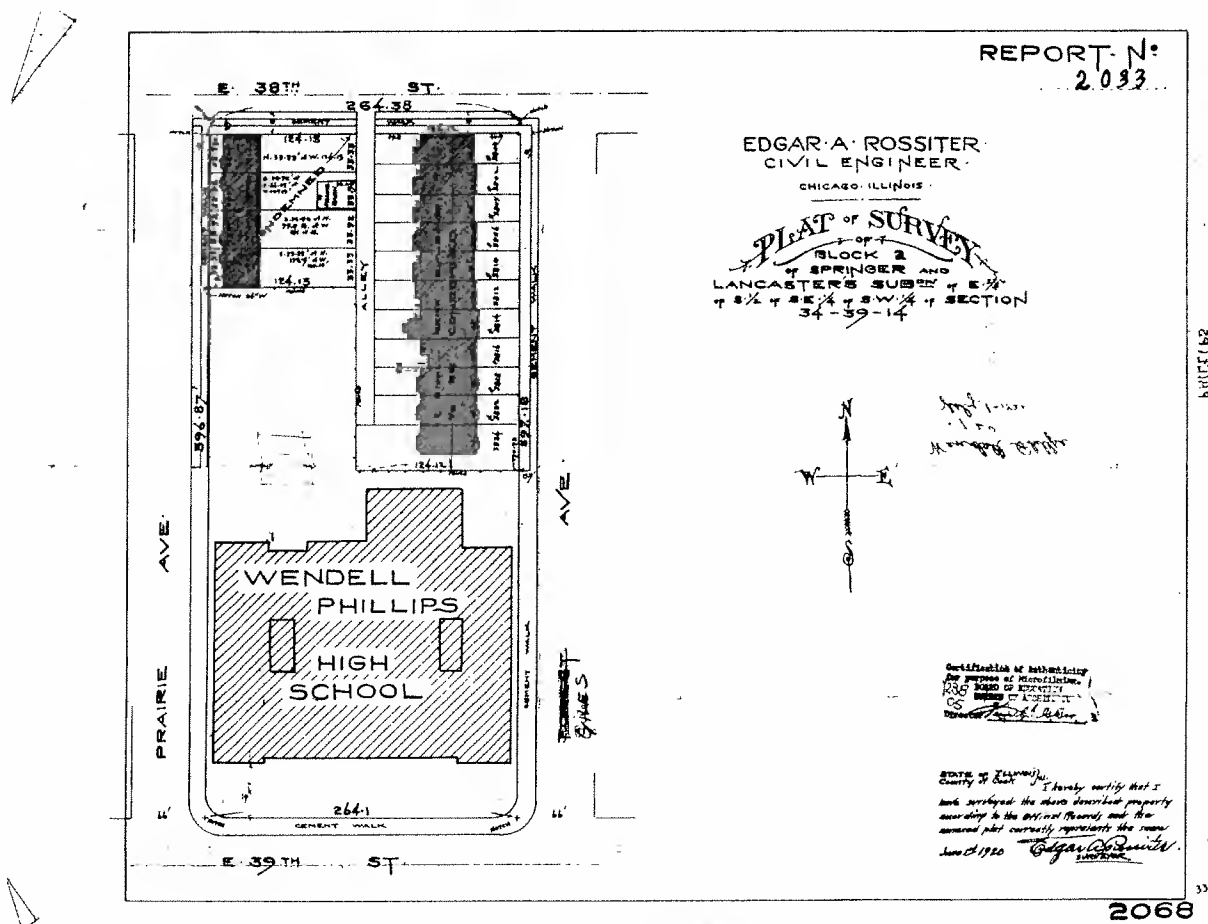
In 1905, Elmer Jensen joined the practice as William Jenney went into retirement, and the firm became Jenney, Mundie & Jensen. In 1907 Jenney died, and the firm became Mundie & Jensen until 1936. From then until the time of Mundie's death in 1939 the practice was known as Mundie, Jensen, Bourke & Havers.

Mundie joined Jenney as he was building the Home Insurance Building (1885; demolished 1931) on the northeast corner of LaSalle and Adams in downtown Chicago. The Home Insurance Building is commonly credited as the first metal skeleton frame building, although at the time several architects were claiming that honor. While Mundie and Jenney worked together their main commissions were tall office buildings, including the State Bank of India Building (1893) at 19 S. LaSalle; the LaSalle-Monroe Building (1894) at 37 S. LaSalle; the Fort Dearborn Building (1895; demolished 1957) at 105 W. Monroe; the Morton Building (1896) at 538 S. Dearborn; and the National Life Building (1902) at 29 S. LaSalle. Among the important buildings designed by Jenney, Mundie & Jensen are 5 N. Wabash (completed 1910), the Lake View Building (completed 1912), and the Union League Building (1926).

Mundie & Jensen built some impressively modern and attractive buildings, including the Consumers Building at 220 S. State Street (1913) and the Lemoyne Building (1915). Mundie is credited with the design of the Horticultural Building erected for the 1893 World's Columbian Fair as well as the Illinois Monument erected on the battlefield at Vicksburg, Mississippi (containing the names of the Illinois soldiers who died in battle). In addition, Mundie, a member of the Board of Governors of the Illinois St. Andrew Society, was architect of both versions of the Scottish Old Peoples Home in Riverside.

It is difficult to separate Mundie from his work in conjunction with Jenney, and for many years Mundie practiced in Jenney's shadow. Mundie frequently won awards for his drawings, however, and it seems likely that after 1884 most of the architectural plans from Jenney & Mundie came from Mundie's drafting table. Mundie had been quoted that the pursuit of a unique American architectural style was a "hackneyed subject," and warned against those who "hunger after novelty for its own sake." In the historic view this may have forced him into obscurity, always to be overshadowed by William Le Baron Jenney who had few qualms about introducing radical ideas. Nonetheless, Mundie had a long and successful career in Chicago, and many of his contributions are still in use.





Above: 1920 plat of Wendell Phillips High School.



Left:  
c. 1920  
postcard of  
the high  
school.

Mundie received a Silver Medal from the Architectural League of New York in 1887, a Clark Gold Medal in 1889, and a Bronze medal at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. He became a member of the Fellow American Institute of Architects in 1892, a member of the Board of Directors of AIA from 1903 to 1905, Second Vice-President in 1906, and First Vice-President in 1907. Mundie was Architect for the Chicago Board of Education from December 1898 to May 1904. According to Donna Rae Nelson in her study of Dwight Perkins (who followed Mundie as Board Architect), Mundie was “badgered out of office by a school board that was more interested in rewarding cronies than in quality scholastic architecture.” The March 28, 1904, Chicago Board of Education *Proceedings* state that Mundie resigned “on account of his health.” He died in 1939, but was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Union League Club of Chicago in 1986. He is buried at Rosehill Cemetery.

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sect. 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, object, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated “criteria for landmark designation,” as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that Wendell Phillips High School be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

### *Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's History*

*Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- Wendell Phillips High School, constructed in 1904, later figured prominently in the education of blacks who were part of the “Great Migration” from the South to Chicago in the late 1910s and 1920s. By the 1920s it had become Chicago’s first predominantly African-American high school.
- In the 1920s and 1930s, Wendell Phillips High School, along with the Wabash Avenue YMCA and the South Side Boys’ Club, formed the “golden triangle” of Chicago’s basketball talent, and was one of the cornerstone institutions of the Black Metropolis. The basketball teams at Phillips were the first to call attention in dramatic fashion to the black talent in the Chicago schools, winning Public League tournaments at a time when the sport was largely segregated. Their response was to create their own opportunities to play, giving rise to one of the great institutions of basketball, the Harlem Globetrotters.

**Criterion 3: Significant Person**

*Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- Maudelle Brown Bousfield (1885-1971) was the first African-American principal of a Chicago public school, and throughout her life continued to achieve a series of “firsts” as a teacher, a researcher, and an administrator working for the improvement of education for African-American children.

**Criterion 4: Important Architecture**

*Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

- Wendell Phillips High School is an important building in its neighborhood and community. Built in 1904 in a Classical Revival-style, Phillips is a three-story red brick building with cut stone detailing, and is an impressive example of the architectural style of public schools built in the first decade of the twentieth century.

**Criterion 5: Important Architect**

*Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- William Bryce Mundie (1863-1939), with William Le Baron Jenney, formed Jenney & Mundie, one of Chicago’s leading architectural firms. Mundie went on to become part of subsequent influential firms: Jenney, Mundie & Jensen; Mundie & Jensen; and Mundie, Jensen, Bourke & Havers. Mundie designed Wendell Phillips High School while he was Architect for the Chicago Board of Education (1898 to 1904) as part of a long and successful career in Chicago.

**Integrity Criterion**

*The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.*

The high school building, constructed in 1904, has continued to be used as a school since it was built and remains virtually intact today, with only a few minor distractions. The elementary school addition, while complementary, is easily distinguished from the 1904 building by the building seam between the two on the west façade. The 1935 and 1937 fires primarily affected the interior, which is not part of this designation. The original metal ornamental cornice was removed prior to 1966 and the windows have been replaced with new windows that match the original openings. Despite these changes, the school retains a high degree of architectural integrity and its location, design, and setting continue to insure its identification in the memories of students for almost a century.

**SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES**

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its preliminary evaluation of Wendell Phillips High School, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- all exterior building elevations of the original 1904 building, including rooflines, visible from public rights-of-way.

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### Illustrations

Nancy Hanks, Landmarks Commission: p. 2, top; p. 14, bottom.

Chicago Planning Department, Structure Outline map, c. 1988: p. 2, bottom.

Powell, "Most Dramatic Orator" [online]: p. 4, top left.

Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*: p. 4, top right.

Wendell Phillips High School, 1915 *Red and Black* Yearbook: p. 4, bottom.

Chicago Historical Society, *Chicago at the Turn of the Century in Photographs*: p. 6, top.

Pacyga and Skerrett, *Chicago, City of Neighborhoods*: p. 6, bottom.

Harlem Globetrotters International, Inc., Michael Hegarty, Public Relations Manager: p. 8, top left and bottom.

Newman, "Savoy Ballroom" [online]: p. 8, top right.

Ray Nance" [online], photograph by Bob Willoughby: p. 10, top left.

"Dinah Washington" [online]: p. 10, top center.

"Sam Cooke" [online]: p. 10, top right.

Horatio Alger Association [online]: p. 10, bottom left.

Urbanworld Films [online]: p. 10, bottom center.

"Milt Hinton" [online]: p. 10, bottom right.

Chicago School Associates: p. 14, top, p. 16, top.

Historic postcard courtesy of John Rolence, Assistant Principal, Wendell Phillips Academy High School: p. 16, bottom.

*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958) TTY; (312-744-9140) fax; web site, <http://www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks>.*

*This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.*